



2018 Avid SC Turkey Hunter Survey

In the spring of 2018, SCDNR put out a request via our website, social media, personal contacts and direct emails to reach as many avid turkey hunters as possible for participation in a voluntary on-line survey. The NWTf SC State Chapter also assisted in the solicitation of survey participants. This survey is in addition to the random mail survey that is conducted every year following the hunting season. The mail survey database is constructed by randomly selecting 30,000 individuals who receive a set of Turkey Transportation Tags which are required in order to hunt turkeys in South Carolina. That survey is primarily utilized to estimate annual turkey harvest and hunting effort along with some information on hunter's opinions of the turkey resource and other aspects of turkey hunting. This on-line survey is intended to supplement, not replace, the mail survey. This survey asks some similar questions for comparison but has a much smaller sample size and targets more dedicated and active turkey hunters. It is notable that hunter effort (days afield) and harvest success averages are significantly higher for the participants in this on-line survey. Through this augmented surveying approach we hope to better understand the demographics, experiences, techniques and opinions of dedicated turkey hunters in the state. The information collected in these surveys along with biological and harvest data helps us evaluate trends and make more informed management recommendations and decisions to benefit wild turkeys & turkey hunters with the ultimate goal of maintaining sustainable, quality turkey hunting into the future. We utilized the SurveyMonkey® online survey tool, there were 1,131 respondents and 1,083 (96%) of the survey respondents turkey hunted in SC during the 2018 season. The results of the on-line survey conducted following the 2018 turkey season are presented here.



Survey Respondent Demographics

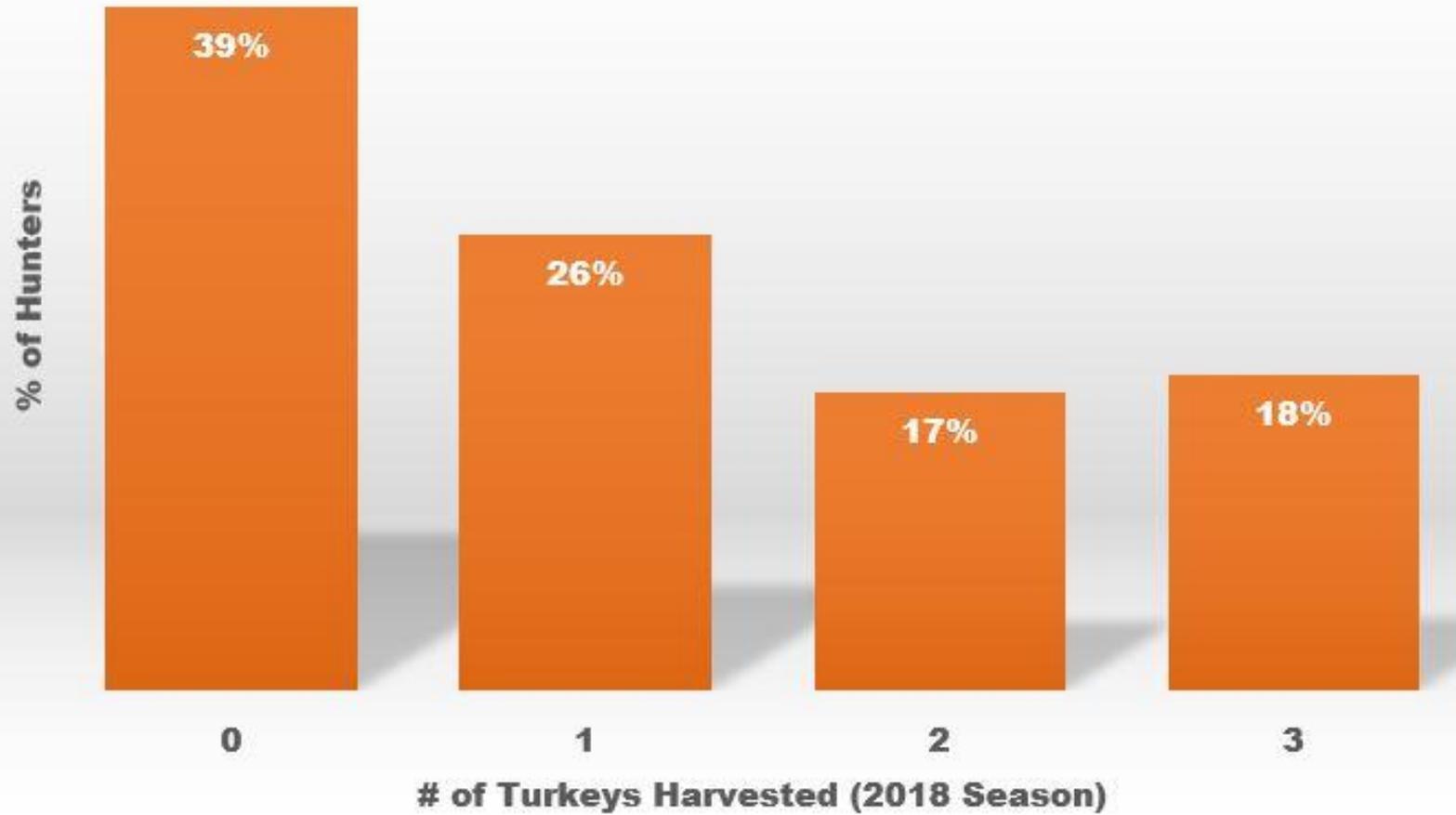
- Average Years of Turkey Hunting Experience: **20**
- Average # of Days Afield Turkey Hunting in SC (2018 season): **12.5**
- Average Acres of Private Land Access in SC to Turkey Hunt: **1600**

- **46.5%** Called or guided for youth or novice adult hunters in 2018

- **12%** Turkey hunted in one state outside of SC in 2018
- **4%** Turkey hunted in multiple states outside of SC in 2018

HUNTING SUCCESS & SATISFACTION

2018 Turkey Harvest Breakdown



Based on 1,083 responses

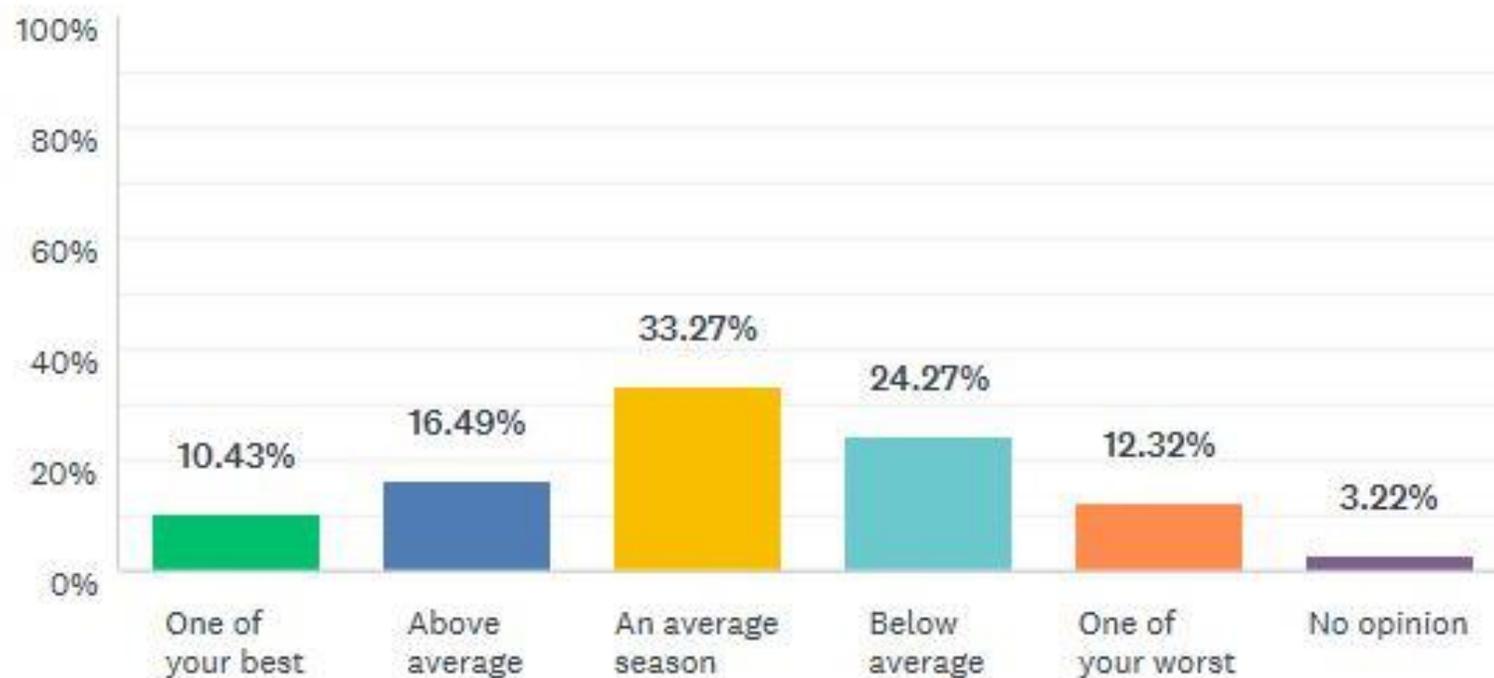
Additional Information

19% missed a turkey

3.5% wounded & did not recover a turkey

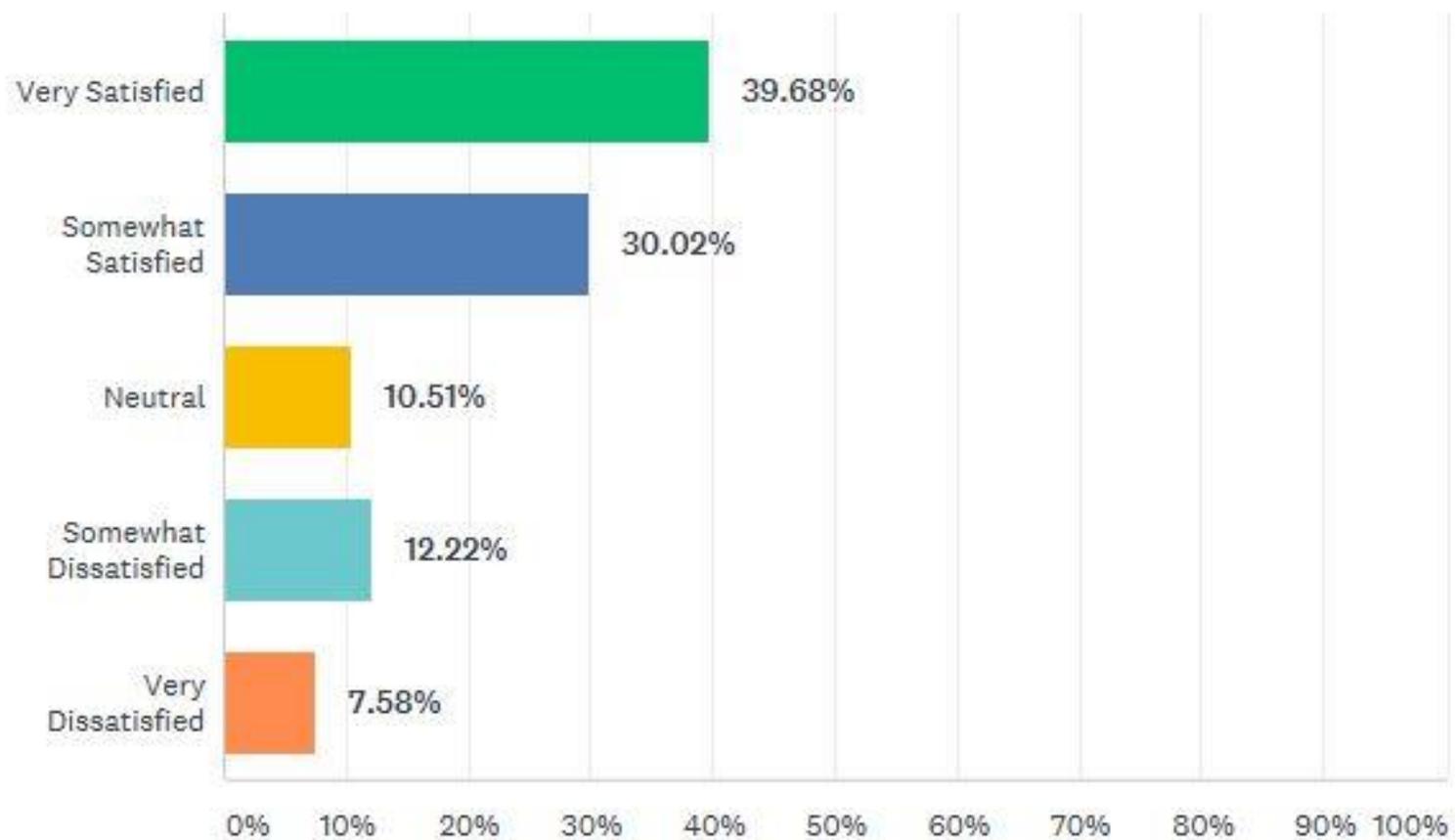
Compared to previous turkey seasons in South Carolina, would you say the 2018 SC season was:

Answered: 1,055 Skipped: 76



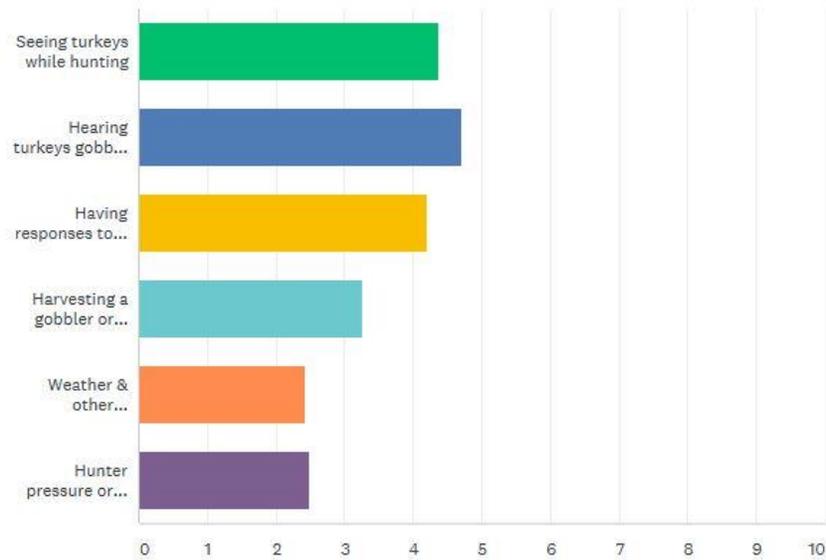
Please rate your satisfaction with your turkey hunting experiences in South Carolina during the 2018 season:

Answered: 1,056 Skipped: 75



Rank the following from most important (1) to least important (6) regarding their influence or impact on your level of turkey hunting satisfaction or enjoyment:

Answered: 1,049 Skipped: 82

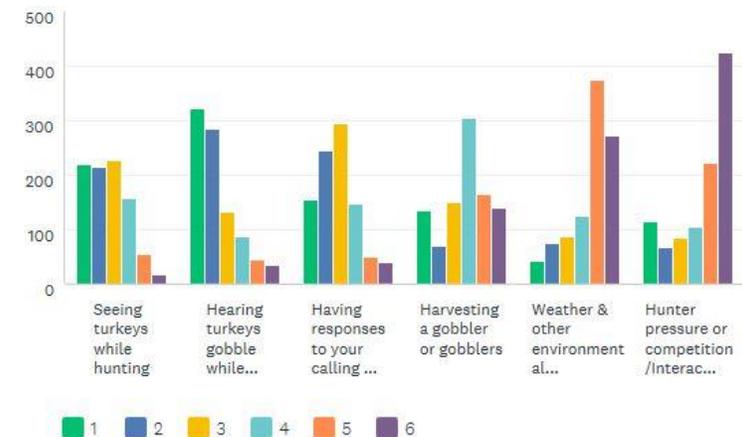


Compared to other listed aspects of the hunt, seeing and hearing turkeys while hunting are the most important factors influencing hunter satisfaction or enjoyment. Weather, insects, & competition/encounters with other hunters have the least impact on hunting satisfaction.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Seeing turkeys while hunting	24.58% 219	24.13% 215	25.48% 227	17.73% 158	6.06% 54	2.02% 18	891	4.37
Hearing turkeys gobble while hunting	35.46% 322	31.39% 285	14.54% 132	9.69% 88	5.07% 46	3.85% 35	908	4.71
Having responses to your calling and interacting with turkeys	16.52% 154	26.18% 244	31.76% 296	15.77% 147	5.47% 51	4.29% 40	932	4.20
Harvesting a gobbler or gobblers	14.12% 136	7.17% 69	15.47% 149	31.67% 305	17.13% 165	14.43% 139	963	3.26
Weather & other environmental conditions while hunting (i.e. rain, wind, heat, cold, insects)	4.29% 42	7.77% 76	9.00% 88	12.68% 124	38.34% 375	27.91% 273	978	2.43
Hunter pressure or competition/Interactions & encounters with other hunters	11.26% 115	6.66% 68	8.33% 85	10.28% 105	21.74% 222	41.72% 426	1,021	2.50

Rank the following from most important (1) to least important (6) regarding their influence or impact on your level of turkey hunting satisfaction or enjoyment:

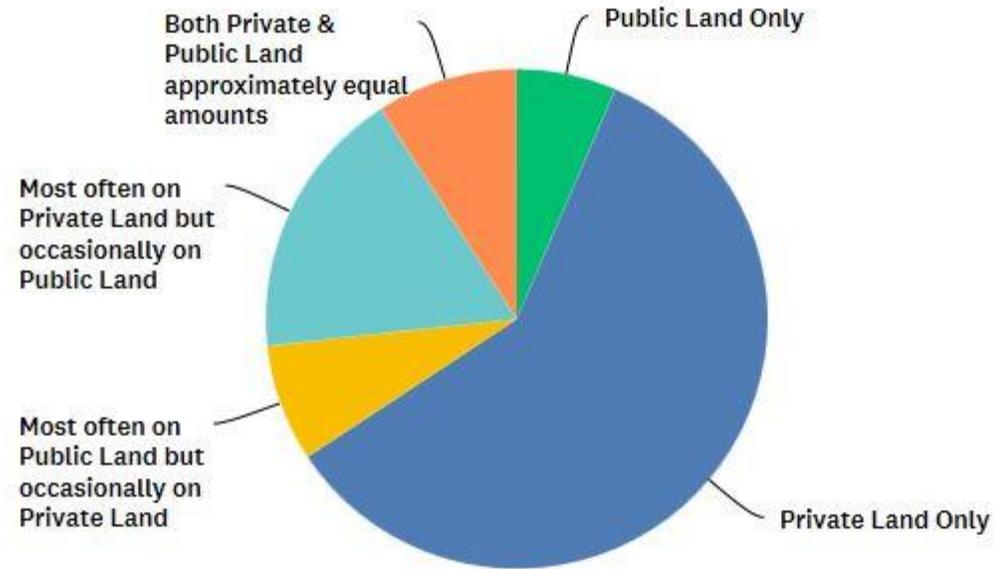
Answered: 1,049 Skipped: 82



HUNTING LAND

What type of property do you turkey hunt in SC?

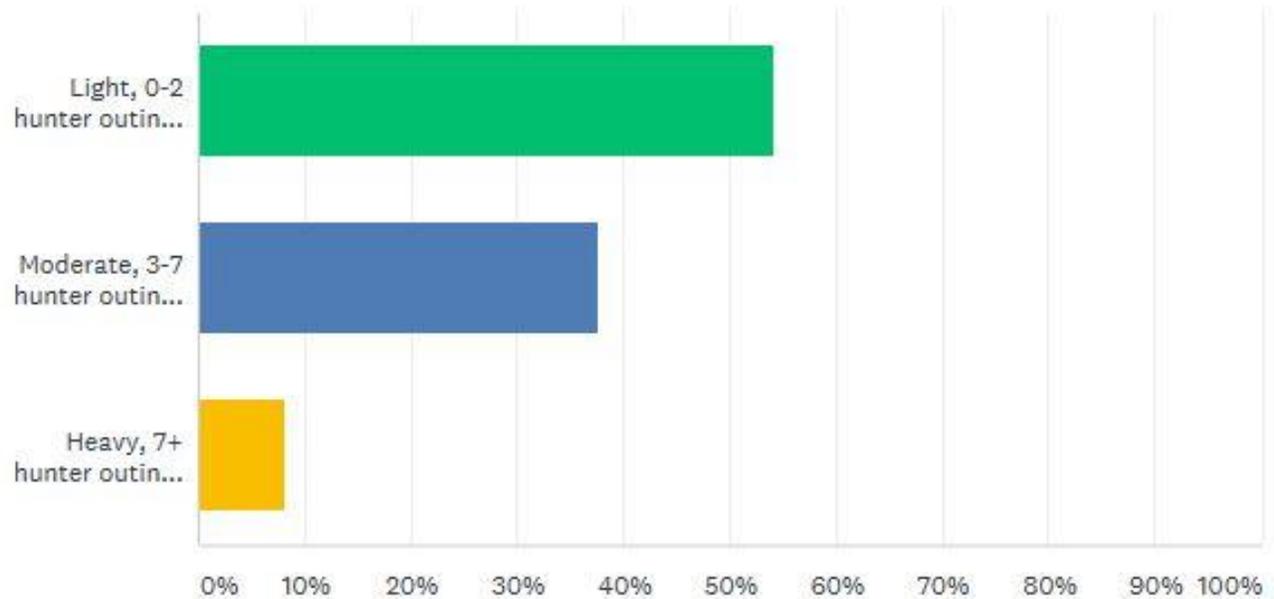
Answered: 1,056 Skipped: 75



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Public Land Only	6.44% 68
Private Land Only	59.28% 626
Most often on Public Land but occasionally on Private Land	7.58% 80
Most often on Private Land but occasionally on Public Land	17.61% 186
Both Private & Public Land approximately equal amounts	9.09% 96
TOTAL	1,056

Describe the hunting pressure on and around the location(s) you most frequently hunt:

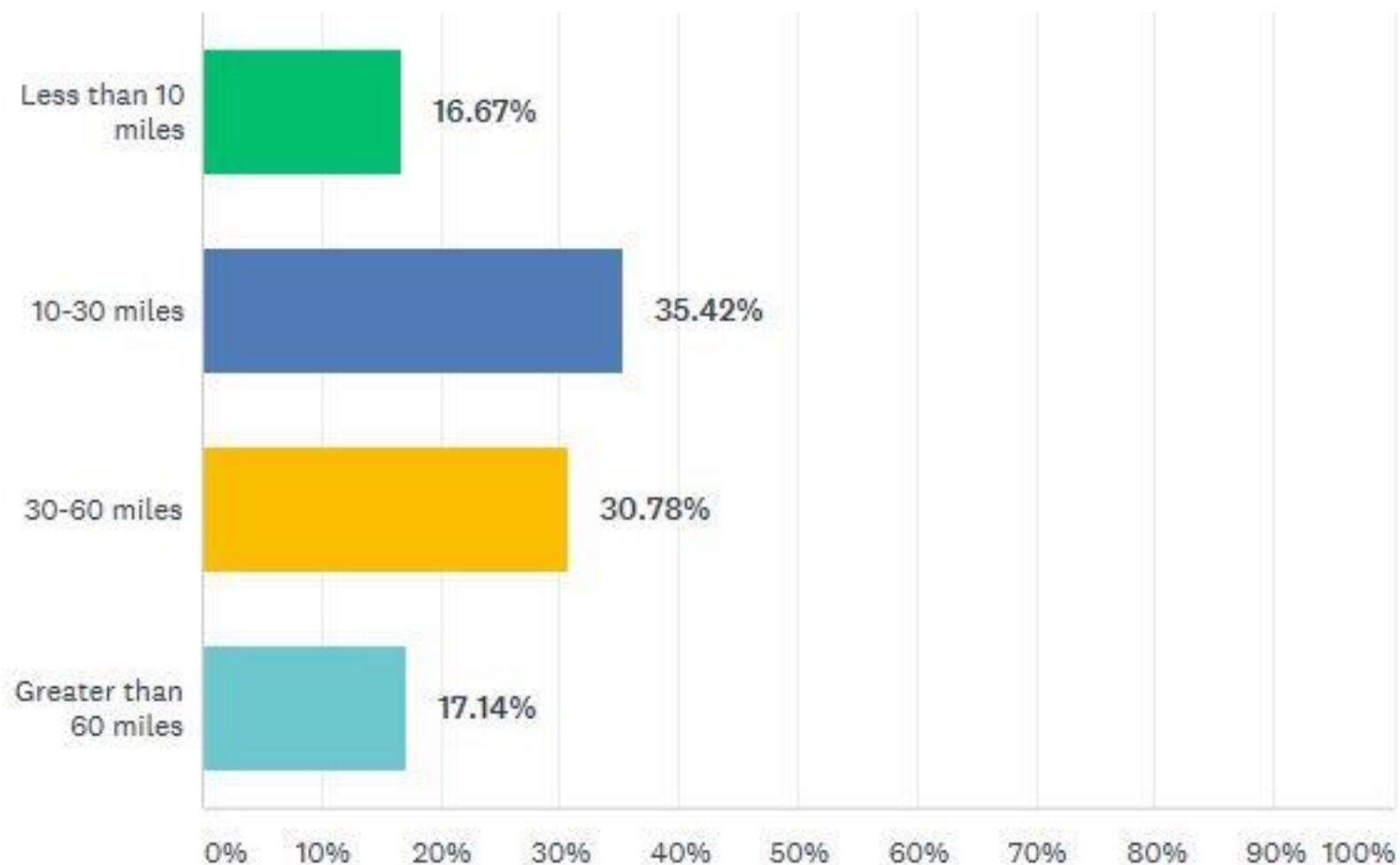
Answered: 1,055 Skipped: 76



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Light, 0-2 hunter outings per 500 acres per week	54.22% 572
▼ Moderate, 3-7 hunter outings per 500 acres per week	37.73% 398
▼ Heavy, 7+ hunter outings per 500 acres per week	8.06% 85
TOTAL	1,055

On average, how far do you travel from home to turkey hunt in SC?

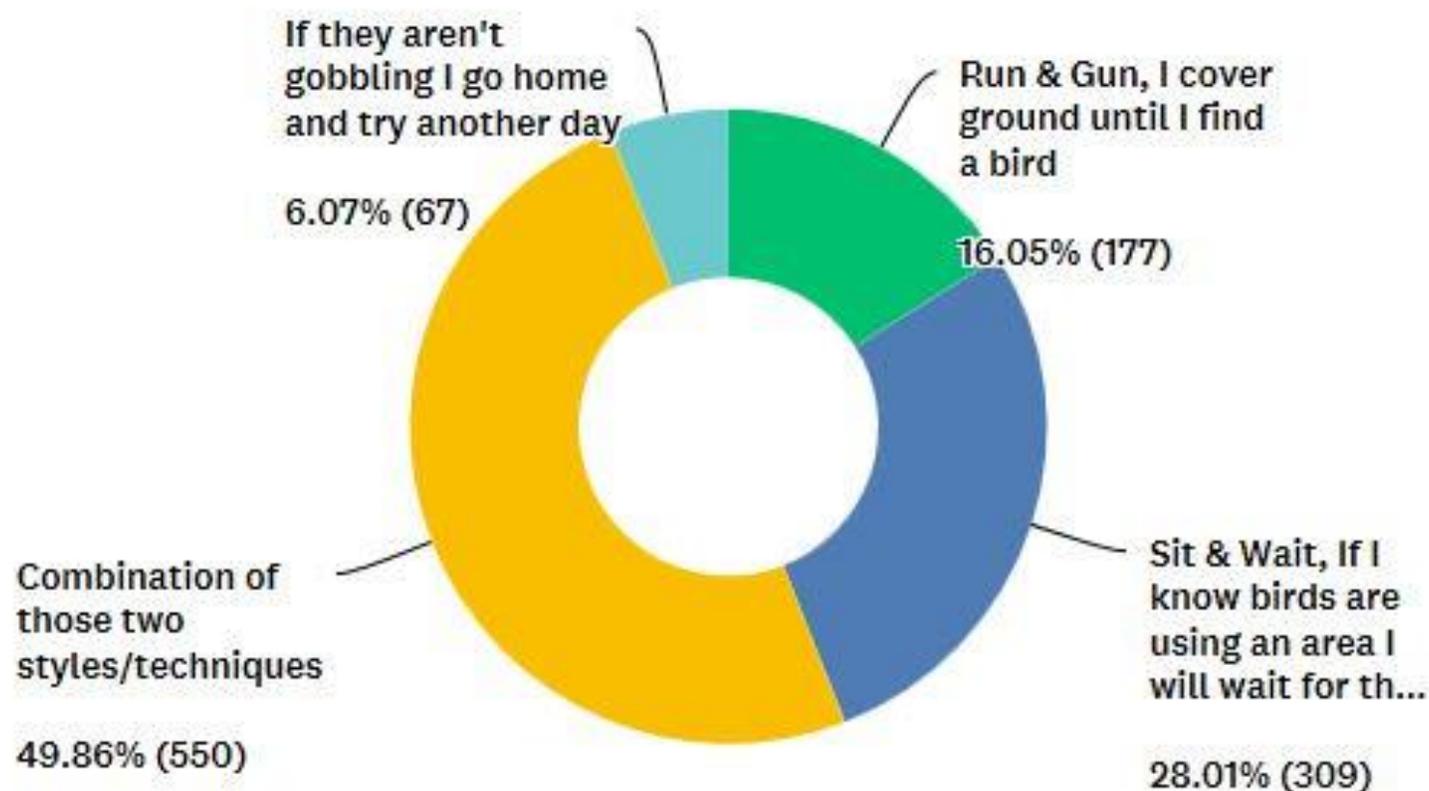
Answered: 1,056 Skipped: 75



HUNTING TECHNIQUES

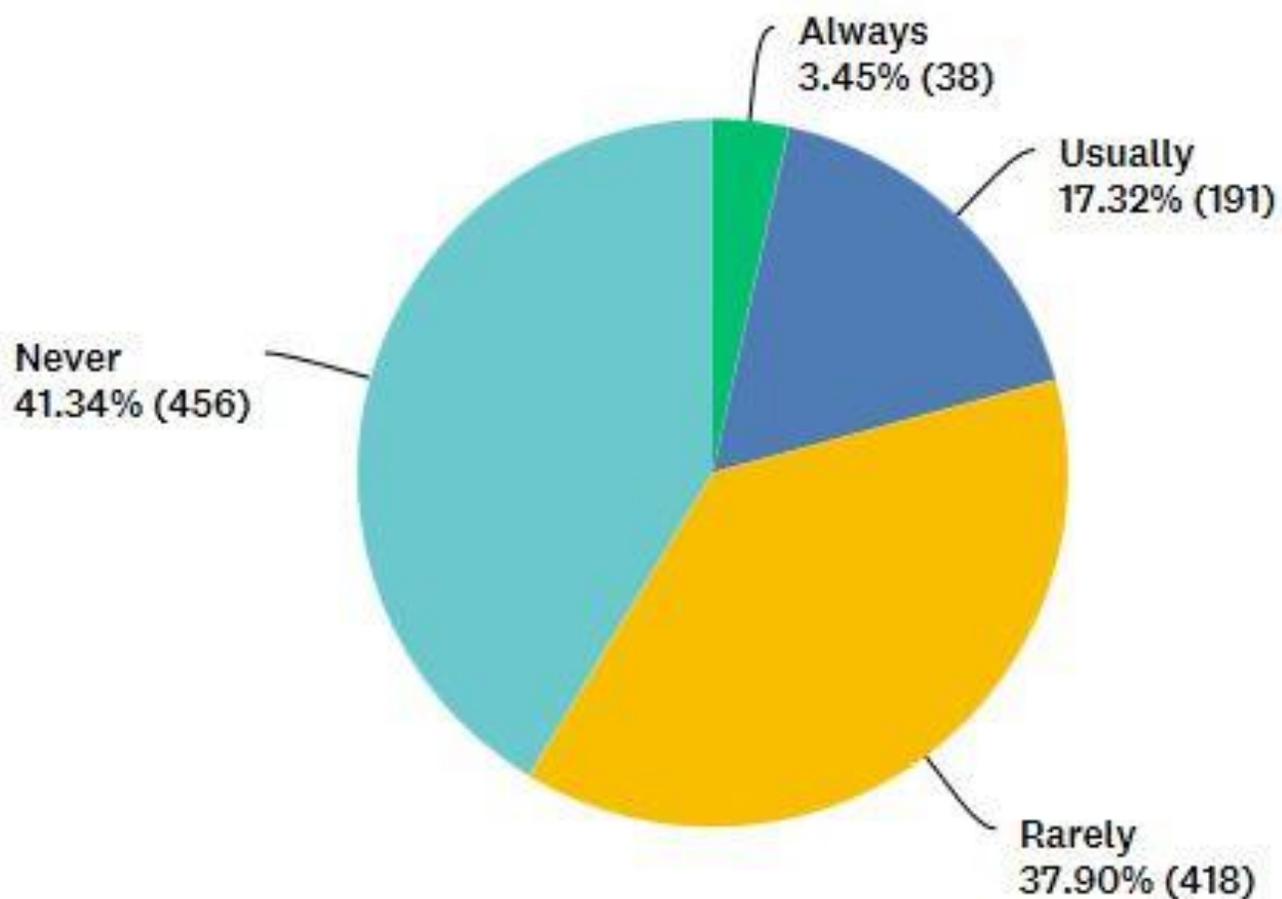
If the turkeys are not gobbling, which hunting style best describes you?

Answered: 1,103 Skipped: 28



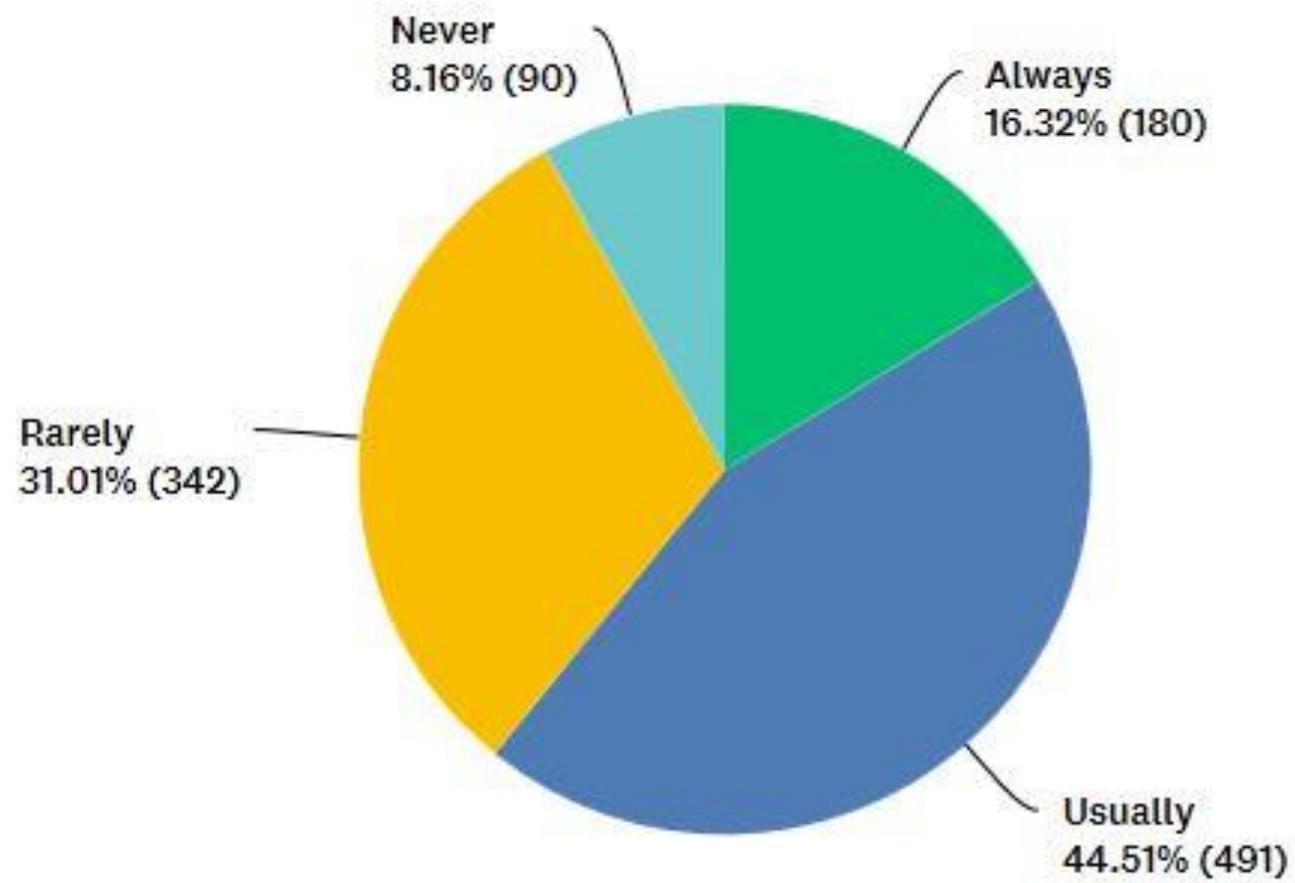
Do you use a manufactured ground blind when turkey hunting?

Answered: 1,103 Skipped: 28



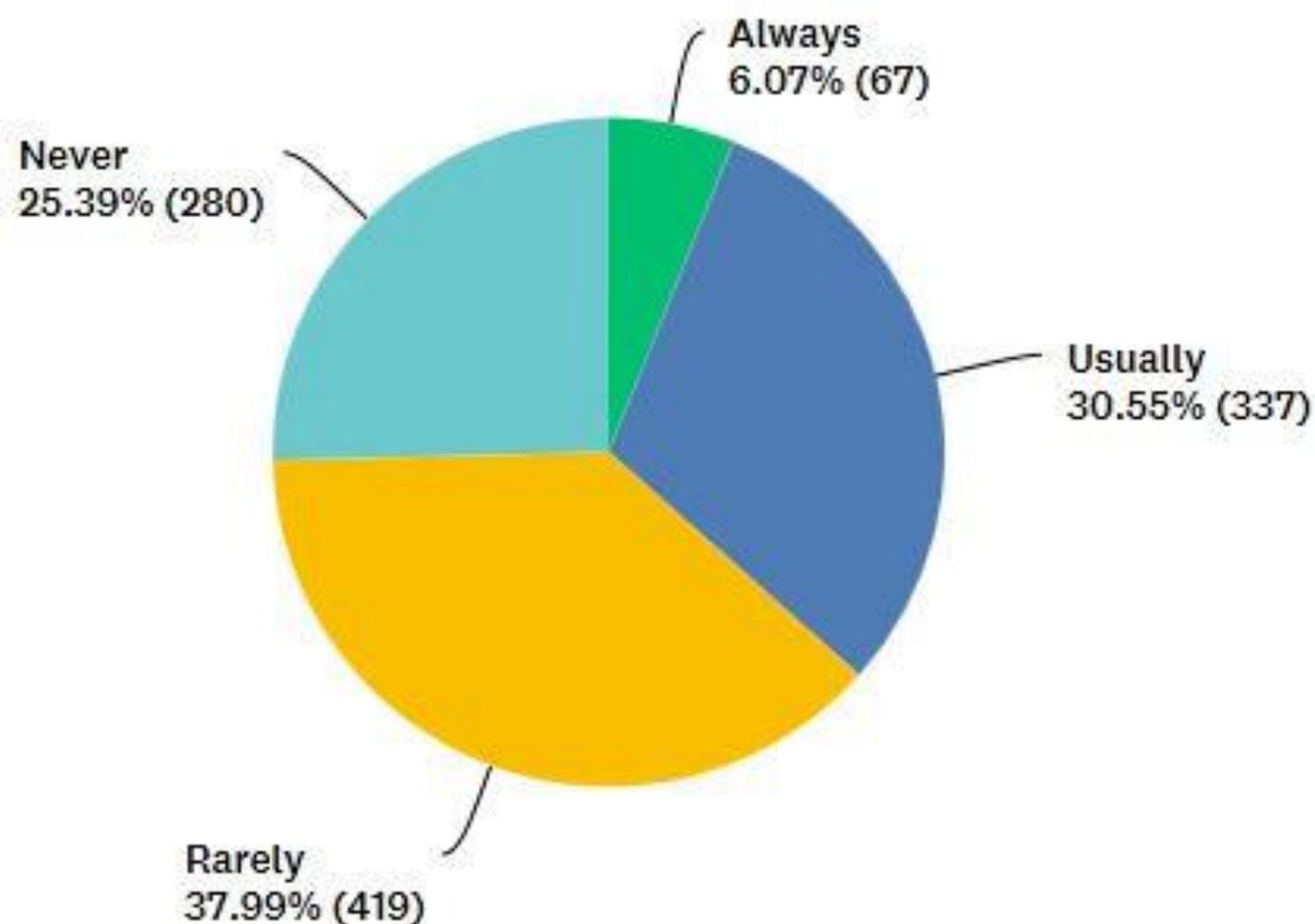
Do you use a hen turkey decoy?

Answered: 1,103 Skipped: 28



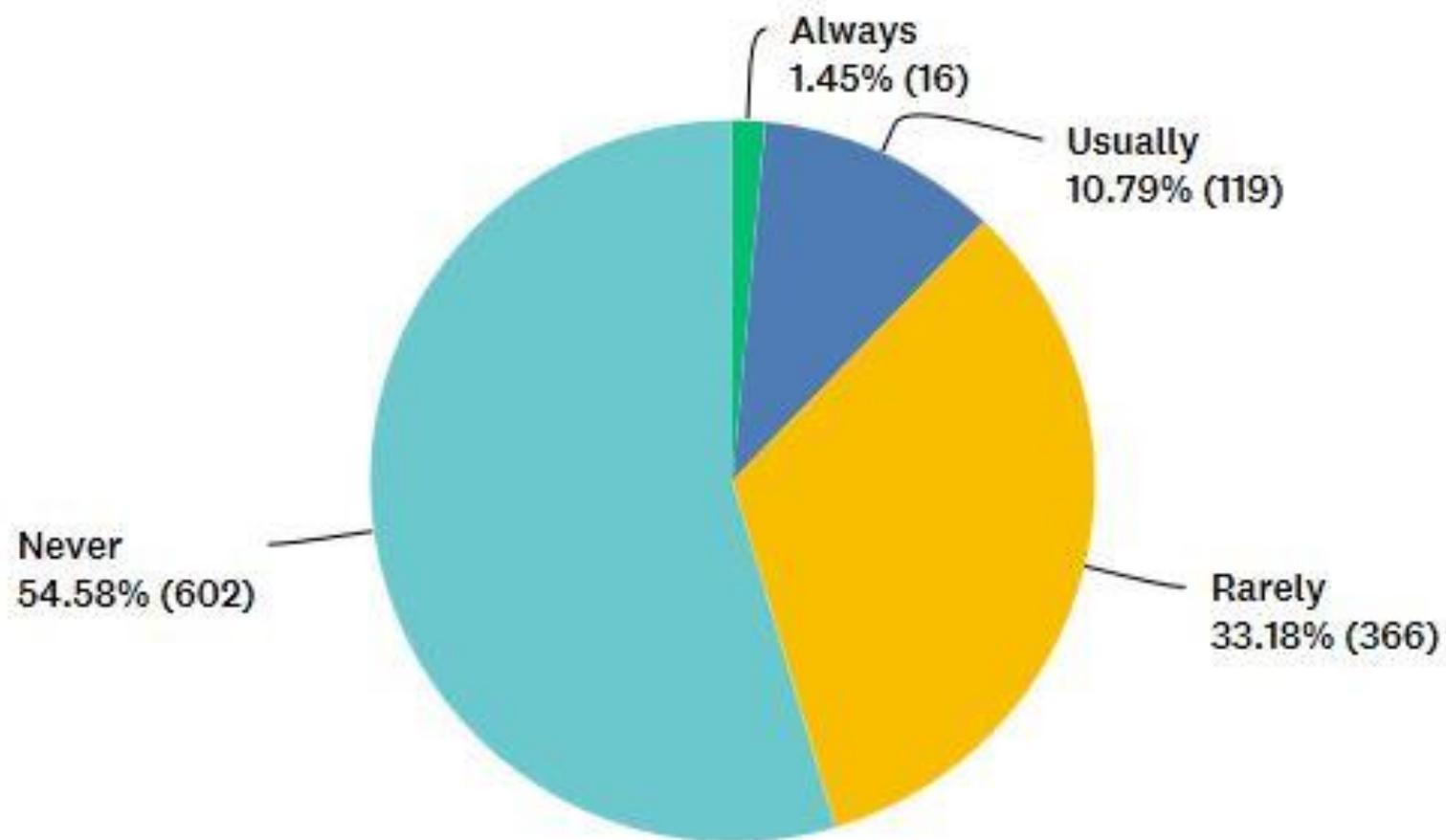
Do you use non-strutting male (jake or tom) decoys?

Answered: 1,103 Skipped: 28



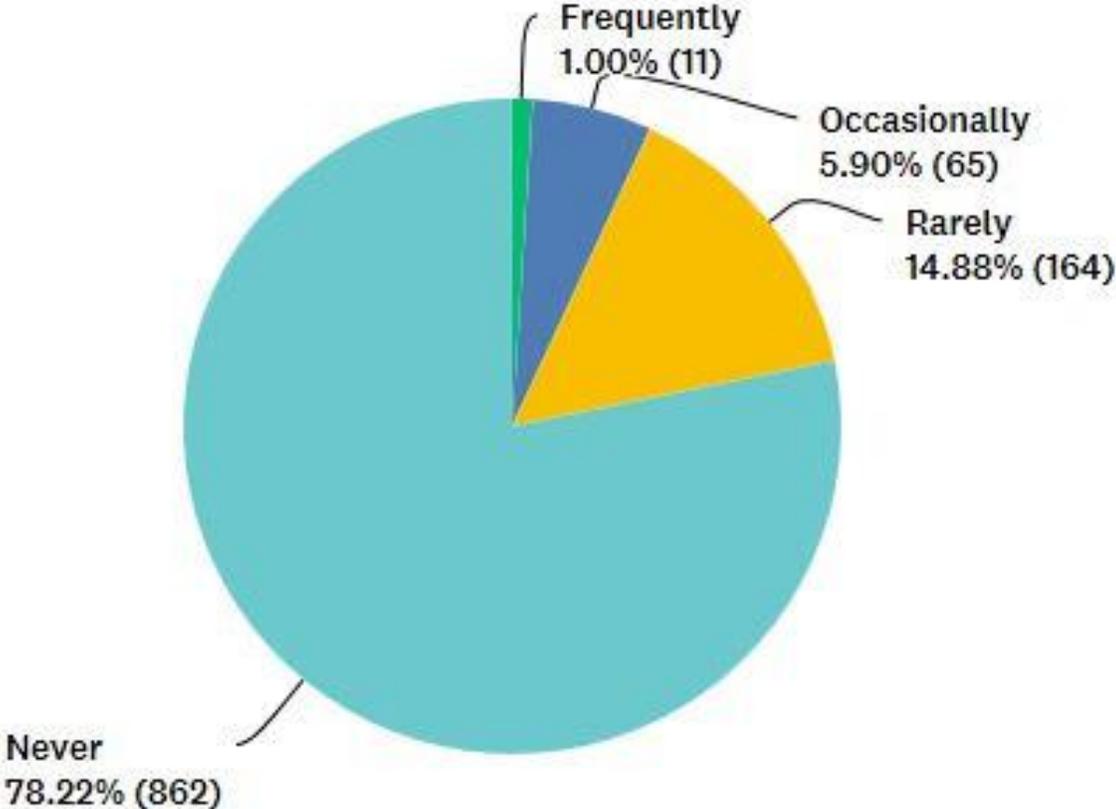
Do you use a Strutter/Full Fan decoy?

Answered: 1,103 Skipped: 28



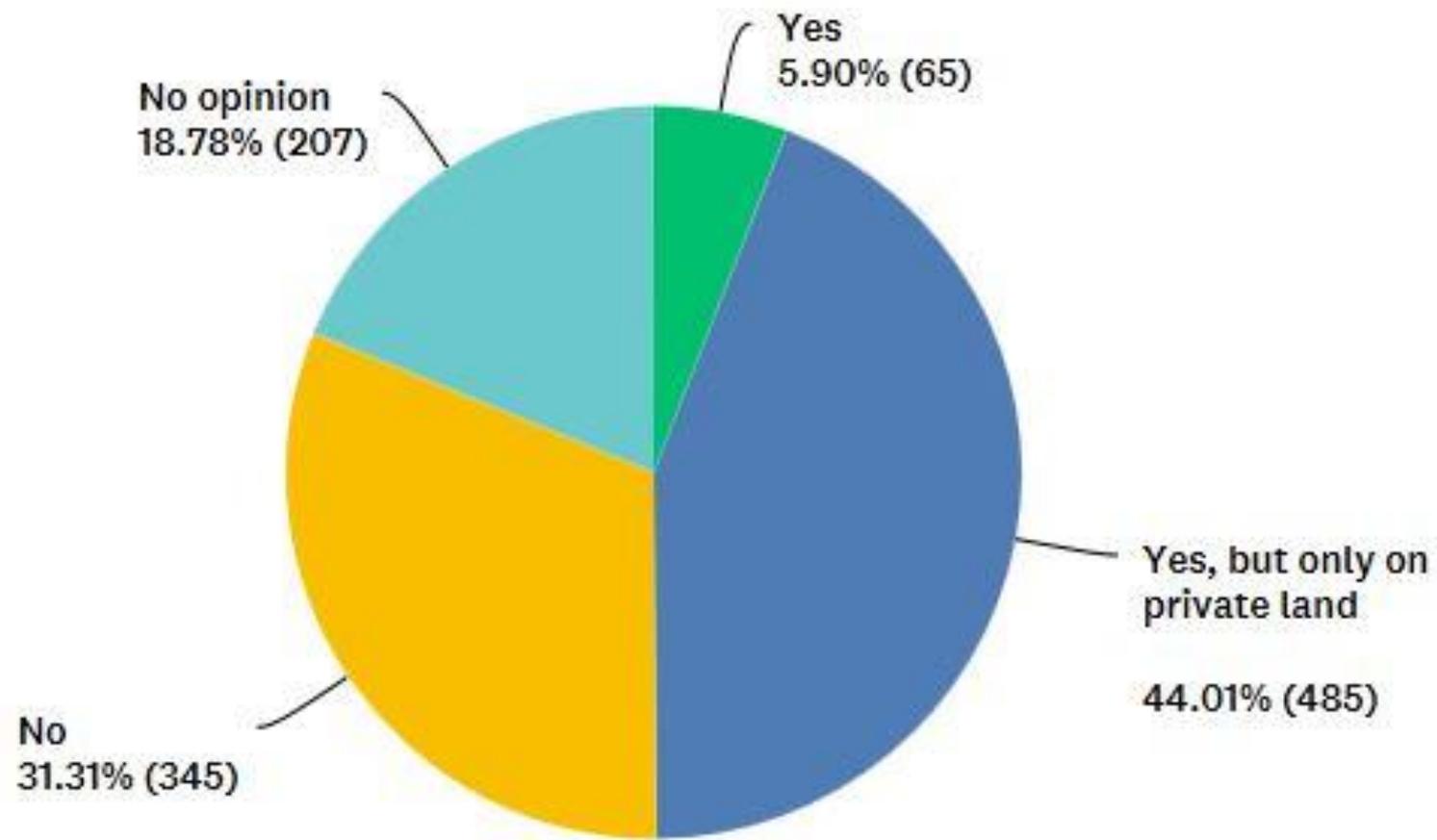
Do you use the fanning/reaping technique? (holding & moving, stalking or crawling with a tail fan, strutting decoy or similar product)

Answered: 1,102 Skipped: 29



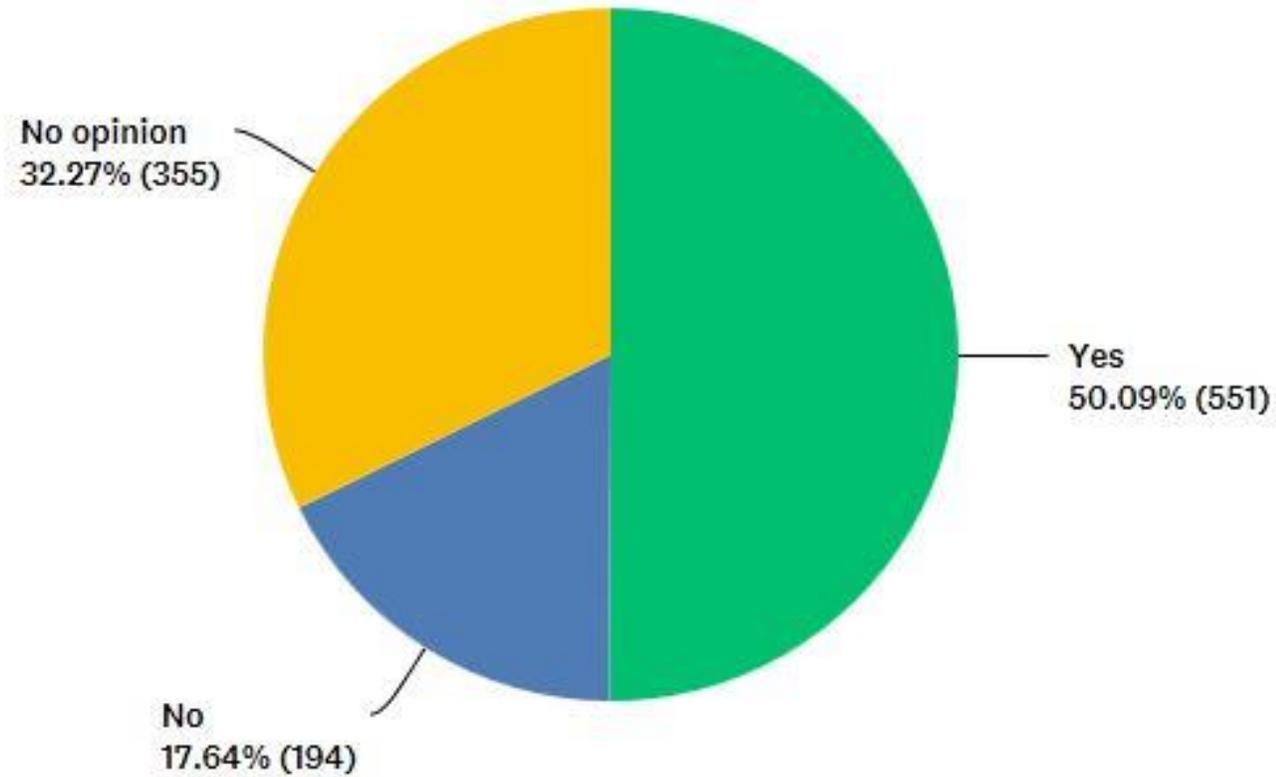
Do you feel that fanning/reaping is a safe practice?

Answered: 1,102 Skipped: 29



Do you feel that fanning/reaping is a fair and ethical hunting technique?

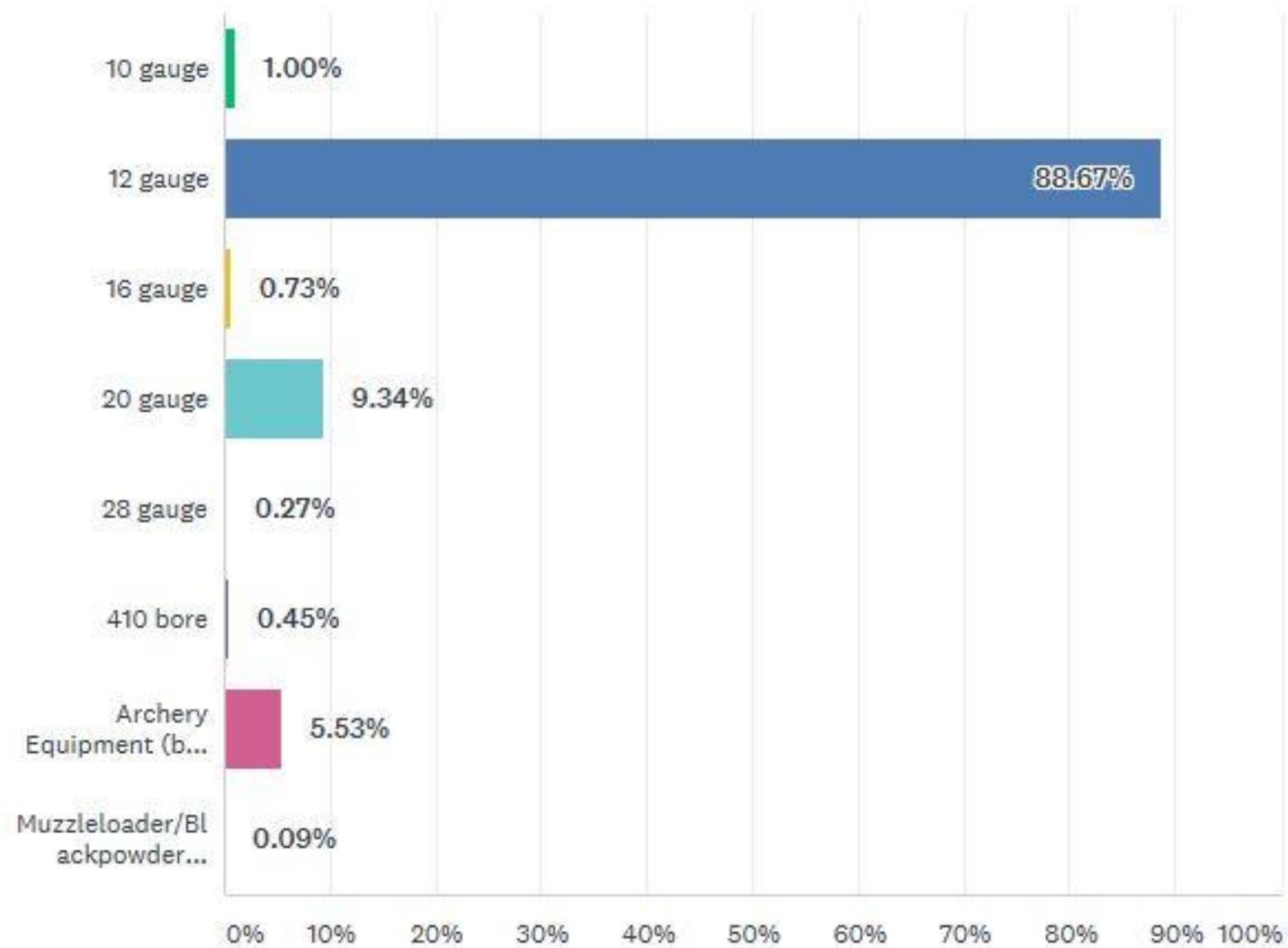
Answered: 1,100 Skipped: 31



GUNS & AMMO

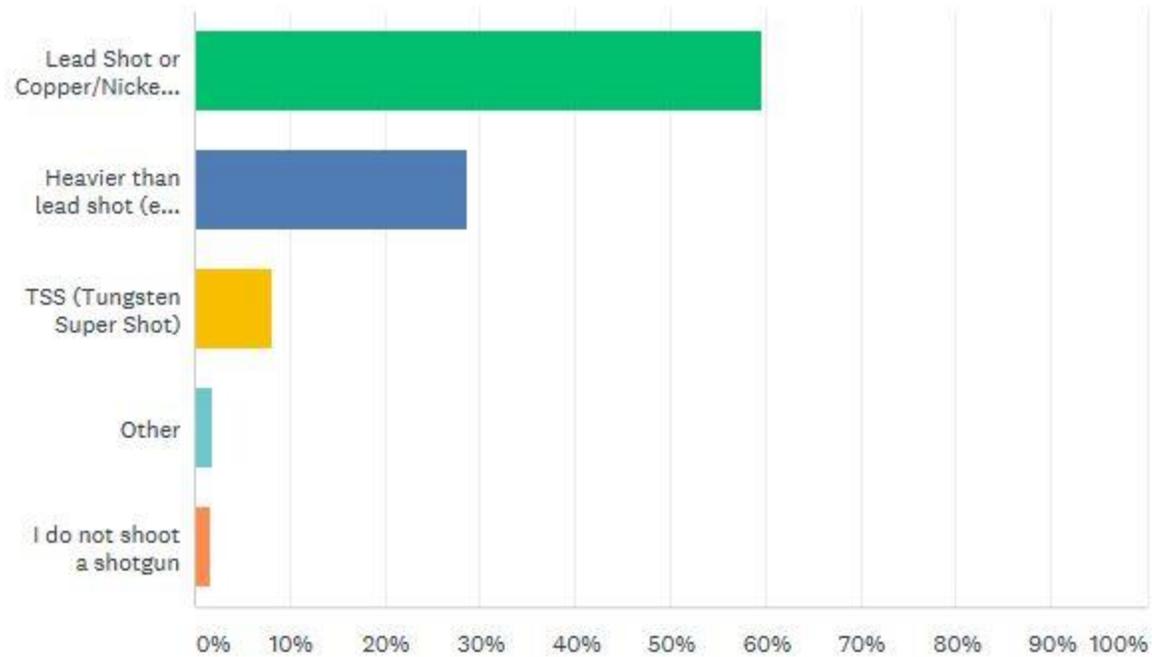
What type of weapon do you primarily use to hunt wild turkeys?

Answered: 1,103 Skipped: 28



What type of ammunition do you use in your turkey gun?

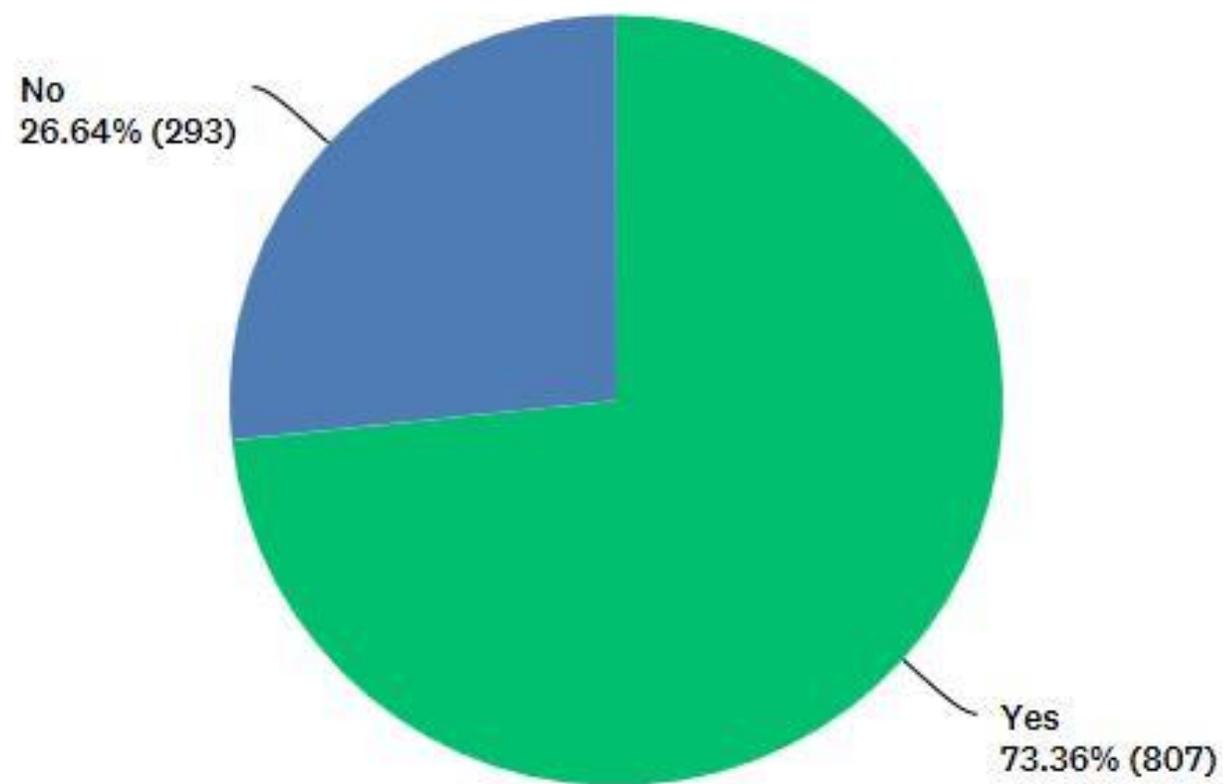
Answered: 1,101 Skipped: 30



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Lead Shot or Copper/Nickel Plated Lead Shot	59.58% 656
Heavier than lead shot (ex. Hevi-Shot, Heavyweight, Bismuth)	28.61% 315
TSS (Tungsten Super Shot)	8.17% 90
Other	1.91% 21
I do not shoot a shotgun	1.73% 19
TOTAL	1,101

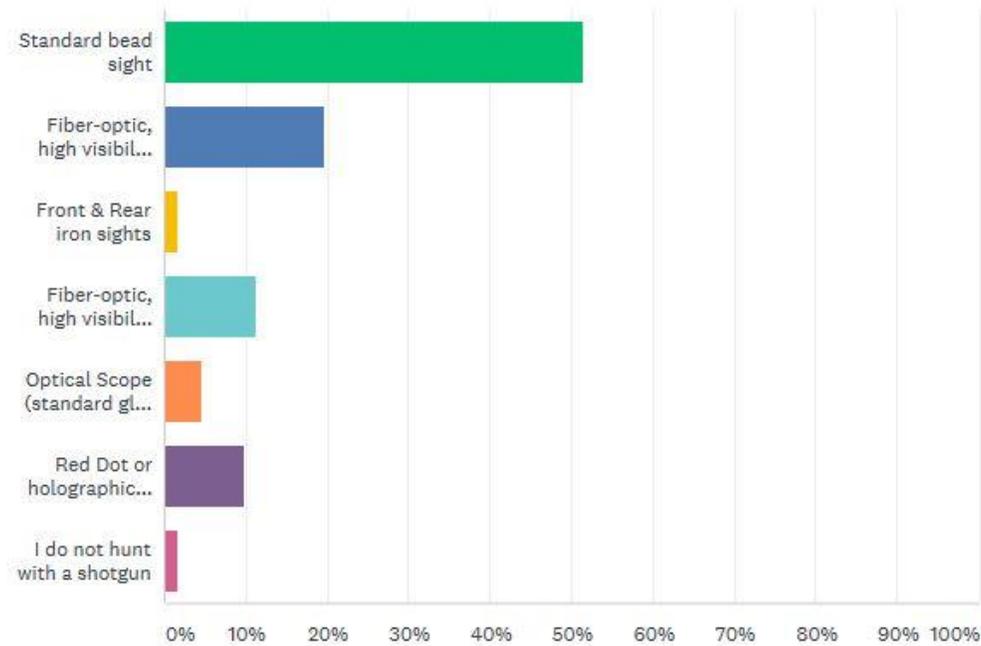
Do you utilize specialized choke tubes that are tighter than standard FULL choke constriction?

Answered: 1,100 Skipped: 31



If you hunt with a shotgun what type of sights or optics do you use for turkey hunting?

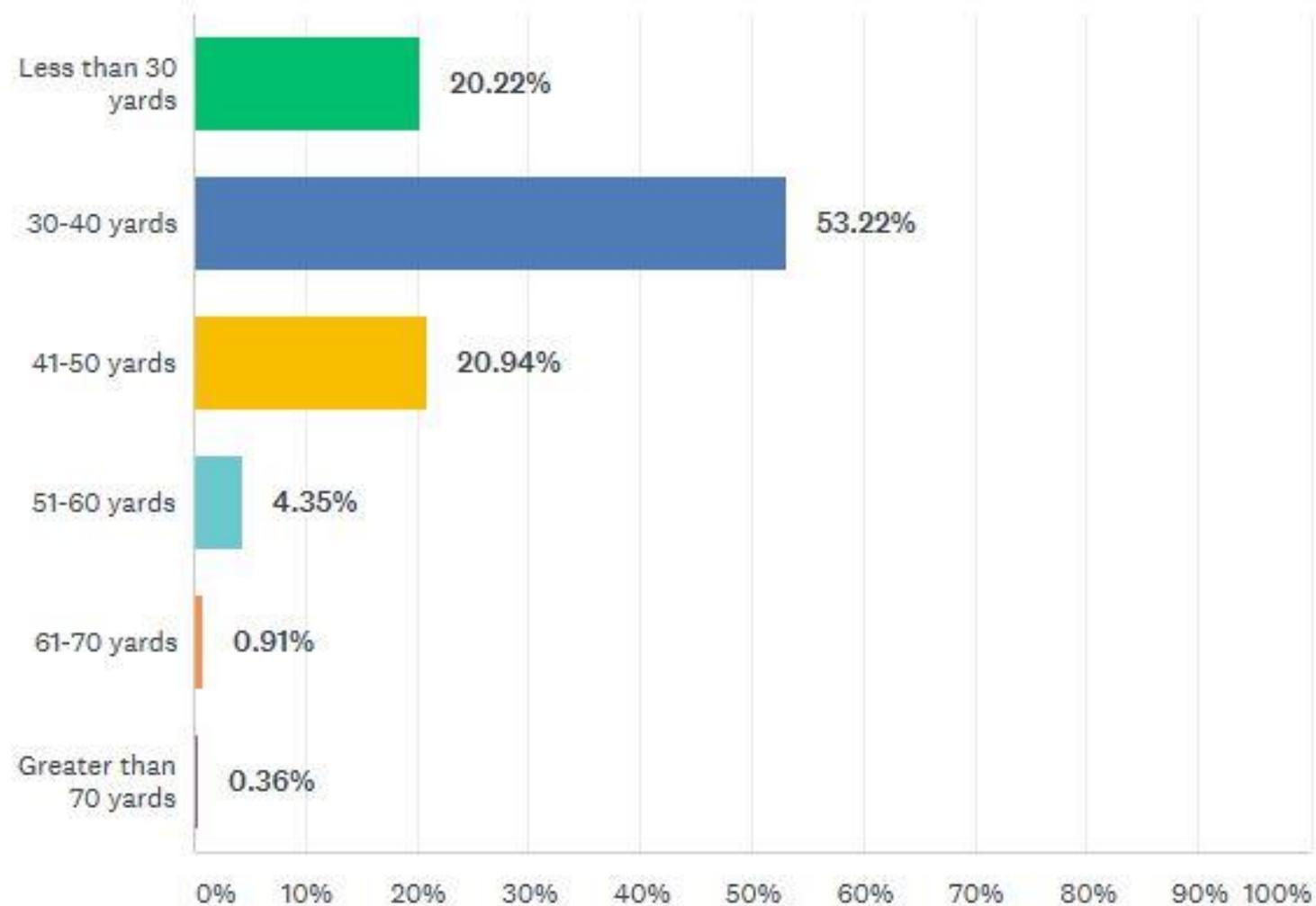
Answered: 1,099 Skipped: 32

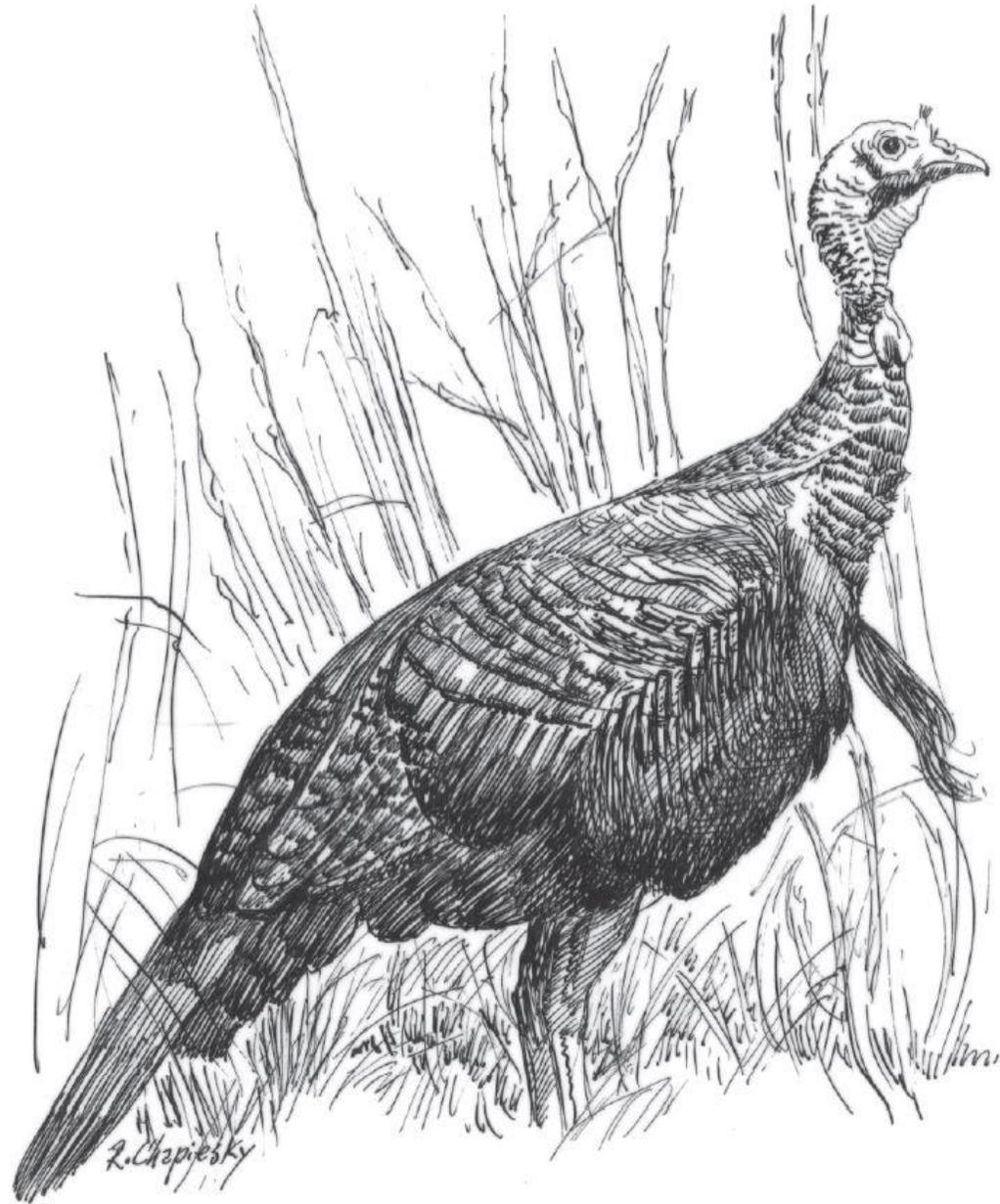


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Standard bead sight	51.41% 565
Fiber-optic, high visibility bead	19.65% 216
Front & Rear iron sights	1.73% 19
Fiber-optic, high visibility front & rear sights	11.28% 124
Optical Scope (standard glass prism scope)	4.55% 50
Red Dot or holographic prism scope/sight	9.74% 107
I do not hunt with a shotgun	1.64% 18
TOTAL	1,099

What do you consider your effective range for shooting a wild turkey?

Answered: 1,103 Skipped: 28





We would like to thank the turkey hunters that participated and took the time to answer questions and provide input. Your effort and interest in the wild turkey is appreciated.

